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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 27450

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Jean Sjulberg DATE 10/5/78
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON (S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

Saigon # 27450

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REF : SAIGON 27457

1. EMBOFF CALLED ON DIRECTORATE RAPPORTEUR DO DANG CONG JUNE 3 TO DISCUSS ISSUE OF ELECTORAL LAW REQUIREMENT FOR 30 "INTRODUCTIONS" FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES. WHILE EMBOFF PRESENT DIRECTORATE SECGEN, GENERAL PHAN XUAN CHIEU, CAME TO CONG WITH LETTER FROM ASSEMBLY (SAIGON

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27392) ON THIS ISSUE. BOTH CONG AND CHIEU CHARACTERIZED THE ASSEMBLY'S LETTER AS "NOT SERIOUS". BOTH ALSO SAID THAT SINCE THE ASSEMBLY HAD FAILED TO REVERSE THE DIRECTORATE'S RECOMMENDATION BY A SUFFICIENT MAJORITY, THE ELECTORAL LAW SHOULD BE PROMULGATED BY THE CHIEF OF STATE WITHOUT RPT WITHOUT THE PROVISION FOR 30 "INTRODUCTIONS". HOWEVER, THEY ALSO SAID THAT THEY EXPECT THE DIRECTORATE WILL HAVE TO CALL A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE MATTER BEFORE GENERAL THIEU PROMULGATES THE LAW.

2. WHEN EMBOFF MENTIONED NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT INDICATE GENERAL KY FAVORS THE REQUIREMENT FOR 30 "INTRODUCTIONS", CONG TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE KY STATEMENTS AWAY BY SAYING THAT THEY WERE MADE BEFORE THE DIRECTORATE MEETING WHICH DECIDED TO ASK FOR DELETION OF THE REQUIREMENT. (THIS IS NOT TRUE SO FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE.) CONG ALSO SAID THAT KY HAD AGREED WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DIRECTORATE TO ASK FOR THE DELETION OF THE REQUIREMENT. HE AVOIDED THE QUESTION OF WHY KY SUPPORTERS IN THE ASSEMBLY CONTINUE TO FAVOR IT.

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3. BOTH CHIEU AND CONG SAID THAT THEY ARE SURE THE 30 "INTRODUCTIONS" WILL NOT BECOME A SERIOUS BONE OF CONTENTION BETWEEN KY AND THIEU. HOWEVER, IN DISCUSSING THE PROBLEMS OF EQUALIZING THE CAMPAIGN FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO ALL CANDIDATES, CHIEU EXCLAIMED WITH SOME ACERBITY THAT IT WAS PROVING IMPOSSIBLE TO EQUALIZE THE MEANS AVAILABLE TO THIEU AND KY, MUCH LESS EQUALIZE THE MEANS FOR ALL CANDIDATES. HE WENT ON TO MAKE SEVERAL REFERENCES TO KY'S POLITICAL ACTITIVITIES SUCH AS THE "RICE BONUS", THE PROMISE TO RETURN CHINESE CONGREGATION PROPERTY, AND RECENT TV APPEARANCES. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY HOW IT COULD BE MADE POSSIBLE FOR TRAN VAN HUONG TO ENJOY SIMILAR FACILITIES WHEN THE FORMAL CAMPAIGN HAS NOT EVEN OPENED.

4. COMMENT: (A) BOTH CONG AND CHIEU ARE THIEU SUPPORTERS. THEY THEREFORE WANT THE DIRECTORATE TO PROMULGATE THE ELECTORAL LAW WITHOUT THE "INTROUDCTION" REQUIREMENT. WHETHER KY AND HIS SUPPORTERS (BOTH IN THE DIRECTORATE AND IN THE ASSEMBLY) WILL AGREE TO THE CHIEU INTERPRETATION OF THE LEGAL SITUATION REMAINS TO BE SEEN. DESPITE CHIEU'S ASSURANCES THAT THE 30 "INTRODUCTIONS" IS NOT A SERIOUS PROBLEM BETWEEN KY AND THIEU, WE BELIEVE THE ISSUE MAY NOT YET BE RESOLVED.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 27774

CINCPAC FOR POLAD.

1. WEEKEND EDITION CHINH LUAN CARRIED HEAVILY CENSORED ACCOUNT OF REMARKS BY CHIEF OF STATE THIEU TO KYODO NEWS SERVICE REGARDING HIS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY. JUSPAO HAS OBTAINED TEXT OF CENSORED PORTIONS FROM CHINH LUAN.

2. HEADLINE OF STORY WAS COMPLETELY CENSORED OUT. IT READ: "THE USE OF MONEY AND MACHINATIONS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS CANNOT WIN THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE."

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3. FIRST PART OF ACTUAL TEXT UNCENSORED AND READS:
QUOTE. SAIGON, JUNE 2: THE USE OF MONEY AND MACHINATIONS TO GET ELECTED CANNOT GAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE, THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN DEFEATING THE COMMUNISTS.
THIS STATEMENT WAS MADE BY LT. GEN. NGUYEN VAN THIEU, CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE, AT INDEPENDENCE PALANCE THIS AFTERNOON IN AN INTERVIEW TIH KYODO NEWS SERVICE. UNQUOTE.

4. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE COMPLETLY CENSORED OUT:
QUOTE: QUESTION: IF YOU RUN FOR PRESIDENT, DO YOU THINK PRIME MINISTER KY WILL WITHDRAW FROM THE RACE?
ANSWER: YOU HAD BETTER ASK THE PRIME MINISTER.
QUESTION: DO YOU THINK THERE WILL BE DISUNITY IN ARMY RANKS IF BOTH YOU AND KY RUN?
ANSWER: I WILL RUN AS A PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL, SO THERE WILL BE NO DISUNITY AT ALL.

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QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE THE SUPPORT OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL GROUPS HERE?
ANSWER: I DO NOT BELONG TO ANY POLITICAL GROUP, SO I CANNOT COUNT ON ANY SUPPORT FROM POLITICAL GROUPS. RELIGIOUS GROUPS DO NOT GET MIXED UP IN POLITICS, SO THEY DO NOT SUPPORT ANY CANDIDATE. UNQUOTE.

5. REMAINING SIGNIFICANT UNCENSORED PORTION OF ARTICLE READS: "GENERAL THIEU SAID HE HAS ALREADY CHOSEN A RUNNING-MATE, BUT HE DID NOT GIVE HIS NAME."
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